

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 22 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Please amend Claims 16-21 as follows.

1-15. (Cancelled)

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16. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus comprising:

illumination means for illuminating an eye fundus area including a specified target region area;

image taking means for taking the image of ~~said the specified region~~ eye fundus area and thereby outputting an image signal;

~~process condition determination means for determining a process condition based on a signal in the vicinity of said specified region, contained in the output of the signal of said image taking means or in the result obtained by processing said output signal~~

signal processing means for processing and normalizing the image signal, based on a condition determined in accordance with the outputted image signal from said image taking means;

~~region extraction means for extracting said specified region according to said process condition determination means~~

position determination means for determining the position of the target area based on an output of said signal processing means; and

auto tracking means for executing automatic tracking of ~~said specified region~~, the position of the target area based on the an output of said region extraction position determining means.

17. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the signal of ~~said specified region~~ the target area indicates a vessel image, and said ~~process condition determination~~ signal processing means is adapted to extract ~~the a~~ a signal of said a portion of the vessel image ~~portion only~~ and to execute a normalization process for varying the gain ~~according to~~ based on the signal of ~~said~~ the portion of the vessel image ~~portion~~.

B/ 18. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said ~~process condition determination~~ signal processing means includes normalizing range setting means for setting an effective range of the normalization process for varying the gain, ~~according to~~ based on the signal of ~~said~~ the portion of the vessel image ~~portion~~.

19. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to claim 18, wherein said ~~process condition determination~~ signal processing means includes normalizing range varying means for varying ~~an effective range of the normalization process~~ a size of a region of normalizing to vary for varying the gain, ~~according to~~ based on the signal of ~~said~~ the portion of the vessel image ~~portion~~.

20. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said normalizing range varying means is adapted to vary ~~the effective range of the~~

~~normalization process according to the~~ a size of a region of normalizing in accordance with a
diameter of ~~said~~ the vessel image.

21. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to ~~claim 17~~ claim
16, wherein, in ~~said~~ the normalization process, the gain is varied from a predetermined period
after ~~the~~ a start of automatic tracking, and is thereafter fixed ~~maintained~~ constant.

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22. (Cancelled).